



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2021-1006; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-00700-T]

RIN 2120-AA64

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** The FAA proposes to supersede Airworthiness Directive

(AD) 2019-26-01, which applies to certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 and -1041

airplanes. AD 2019-26-01 requires repetitive detailed inspections, and applicable corrective actions, and provides an optional modification that would terminate the inspections.

Since the FAA issued AD 2019-26-01, a determination was made that a related production modification was not properly installed on certain airplanes. This proposed AD would retain the requirements of AD 2019-26-01, and, for certain airplanes, would add a one-time detailed inspection of the modification for proper installation, and applicable corrective actions if necessary, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is proposed for incorporation by reference. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For the material that will be incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); Internet [www.easa.europa.eu](http://www.easa.europa.eu) You may view this IBR material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-1006.

### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-1006; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3225; email [dan.rodina@faa.gov](mailto:dan.rodina@faa.gov).

### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### **Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include

“Docket No. FAA-2021-1006; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-00700-T” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend the proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this proposed AD.

### **Confidential Business Information**

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3225; email [dan.rodina@faa.gov](mailto:dan.rodina@faa.gov). Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

### **Background**

The FAA issued AD 2019-26-01, Amendment 39-21023 (85 FR 4199, January 24, 2020) (AD 2019-26-01), which applies to certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 and -1041 airplanes. AD 2019-26-01 requires repetitive detailed inspections, and applicable corrective actions, and provides an optional modification that would terminate the inspections. The FAA issued AD 2019-26-01 to address possible water ingress due to sealant bead damage, which could result in corrosion damage in the aluminum corner fitting. This condition, if not addressed, could lead to detachment and loss of the trimmable horizontal stabilizer (THS), possibly resulting in loss of control of the airplane and injury to persons on the ground.

#### **Actions Since AD 2019-26-01 Was Issued**

Since the FAA issued AD 2019-26-01, it has been determined that Airbus production modification 113102 was not properly installed on certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 and -1041 airplanes.

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2021-0141, dated June 15, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0141) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A350-941 and -1041 airplanes. EASA AD 2021-0141 supersedes EASA AD 2019-0206 (which corresponds to FAA AD 2019-26-01).

This proposed AD was prompted by a determination that a related production modification was not properly installed on certain airplanes. The FAA is proposing this AD to address possible water ingress due to sealant bead damage, which could result in corrosion damage in the aluminum corner fitting. This condition, if not addressed, could lead to detachment and loss of the THS, possibly resulting in loss of control of the airplane and injury to persons on the ground. See the MCAI for additional background information.

## **Explanation of Retained Requirements**

Although this proposed AD does not explicitly restate the requirements of AD 2019-26-01, this proposed AD would retain all of the requirements of AD 2019-26-01. Those requirements are referenced in EASA AD 2021-0141, which, in turn, is referenced in paragraph (g) of this proposed AD.

## **Related Service Information under 1 CFR Part 51**

EASA AD 2021-0141 describes procedures for repetitive detailed inspections for damage of the fillet sealant and corrosion on aluminum in the lower and upper corner fittings and bearing assembly attachment interface at frame (FR) 102, left-hand and right-hand sides, and an optional modification (application of new corrosion protection in the THS upper and lower attachment fitting bearing assembly) that would eliminate the need for the repetitive inspections. EASA AD 2021-0141 also describes procedures for a one-time detailed inspection of the modification of the lower and upper corner fittings and bearing assembly attachment interface at FR 102, left-hand and right-hand sides (Airbus production modification 113102) for discrepancies (including missing sealant bead, cracks in the sealant bead, and corrosion on the affected bearing zone) and corrective actions (including, but not limited to, a check for grease, a check for cracks in the sealant bead, applying sealant, torquing the bearing nut, inspecting for corrosion on the affected bearing zone, applying corrosion preventative compound and actions to address missing grease and corrosion). This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

## **FAA's Determination and Requirements of this Proposed AD**

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, the FAA has been notified of the unsafe condition

described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA is proposing this AD because the FAA evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

### **Proposed AD Requirements**

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2021-0141 described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD.

### **Explanation of Required Compliance Information**

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some civil aviation authority (CAA) ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, the FAA proposes to incorporate EASA AD 2021-0141 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2021-0141 in its entirety through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in EASA AD 2021-0141 does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to "all required actions and compliance times," compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled "Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)" in EASA AD 2021-0141. Service information required by EASA AD 2021-0141 for compliance will be available at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-1006 after the FAA final rule is published.

## Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this proposed AD affects 15 airplanes of U.S. registry.

The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

### Estimated costs for required actions

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Retained actions from AD 2019-26-01	30 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,550	\$0	\$2,550	\$38,250
New proposed actions	32 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,720	\$0	\$2,720	\$40,800

The FAA has received no definitive data that would enable the agency to provide cost estimates for the corrective actions (including repair) specified in this proposed AD.

### Estimated costs of optional actions

Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product
34 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,890	\$0	\$2,890

## Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority

because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

### **Regulatory Findings**

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Would not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

### **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

- 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

- 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by:

- a. Removing Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2019-26-01, Amendment 39-21023 (85 FR 4199, January 24, 2020); and
- b. Adding the following new AD:



**Airbus SAS:** Docket No. FAA-2021-1006; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-00700-T.

**(a) Comments Due Date**

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by  
[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL  
REGISTER].

**(b) Affected ADs**

This AD replaces AD 2019-26-01, Amendment 39-21023 (85 FR 4199,  
January 24, 2020) (AD 2019-26-01).

**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to Airbus SAS Model A350-941 and -1041 airplanes, certificated  
in any category, as identified in European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)  
AD 2021-0141, dated June 15, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0141).

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53, Fuselage.

**(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by reports of sealant bead damage caused by rotation of  
the attachment fitting bearing assembly of a trimmable horizontal stabilizer (THS) and a  
determination that a related production modification was not properly installed on certain  
airplanes. The FAA is issuing this AD to address possible water ingress due to sealant  
bead damage, which could result in corrosion damage in the aluminum corner fitting.  
This condition, if not addressed, could lead to detachment and loss of the THS, possibly  
resulting in loss of control of the airplane and injury to persons on the ground.

**(f) Compliance**

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

**(g) Requirements**

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2021-0141.

**(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2021-0141**

(1) Where EASA AD 2021-0141 refers to February 21, 2018 (the effective date of EASA AD 2018-0037), this AD requires using February 28, 2020 (the effective date of FAA AD 2019-26-01).

(2) Where EASA AD 2021-0141 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(3) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2021-0141 does not apply to this AD.

**(i) Other FAA AD Provisions**

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov.

(i) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(ii) AMOCs approved previously for AD 2019-26-01 are approved as AMOCs for the corresponding provisions of EASA AD 2021-0141 that are required by paragraph (g) of this AD.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer*: For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) *Required for Compliance (RC)*: For any service information referenced in EASA AD 2021-0141 that contains RC procedures and tests: Except as required by paragraph (i)(2) of this AD, RC procedures and tests must be done to comply with this AD; any procedures or tests that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those procedures and tests that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the procedures and tests identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to procedures or tests identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

**(j) Related Information**

(1) For information about EASA AD 2021-0141, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); Internet [www.easa.europa.eu](http://www.easa.europa.eu). You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. This material may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-1006.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3225; email [dan.rodina@faa.gov](mailto:dan.rodina@faa.gov).

Issued on November 12, 2021.

Lance T. Gant, Director,  
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2021-25072 Filed: 11/17/2021 8:45 am; Publication Date: 11/18/2021]